(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any survey has been conducted in this regard, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Recently Indian Airlines has conducted a survey which reveals that the estimated passengers on the Ludhiana-Delhi route is around 20 passengers, per day, each way.

The airfield at Ludhiana is suitable for operation with smaller type of aircraft. Due to constraint of smaller aircraft in Indian Airlines, fleet it is not in a position to provide air transport services between Delhi and Ludhiana.

Accident involving IC 724 of IA

4046. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently the Indian Airlines flight IC-724 with 144 passengers on board, from Kolkata to Bangkok crashed on to the tramac during take off as, reportedly, the right rear wheel of the aircraft slipped through an ants-ridden and weakened surface of the runway;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the results of any inquiry conducted into the incident; and

(c) the steps taken for proper upkeep and maintenance of the runway and other infrastructural facilities at the Kolkata airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) (a) and (b) No, Sir. An Indian Airlines A-320 aircraft VT-ESB operating flight IC-727 Kolkata to Yangon was involved in an incident. While taxing out of Kolkata airport, main right wheels of the aircraft got bogged into the taxiway surface. Investigation has revealed that the damaged area of taxiway was repaired earlier and its strength, including compactness of the bitumen surface, had regraded.

(c) In the Ninth Plan period, Airports Authority of India (AAI) has completed various, project at Kolkata airport like resurfacing of taxi track, construction of new apron for remote bays, construction of security hold for third aerobridge,

modification of international terminal building, reconstruction of taxi track, reconstruction of bays number 1 and 2 and strengthening of bays number 10,13,15 and 17.

Improvement of Rajahmundry Airport

4047. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1369 given in the Rajya Sabha on 3rd December, 2002 and state:

(a) whether other nearby airports like Rajahmundry will also be improved; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) and (b) The runway has been strengthened and new apron and taxiway have been constructed in April, 2002 at Rajahmundry airport for operation of ATR-72 type of aircraft.

Acceptance of Cash Deposits from Credit Card Holders

4048. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO :

SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO :

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the State Bank of India does not accept cash deposits from the credit card holders as is being done by other banks in the metropolitan cities and insists on payments by cheques;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for not providing credit card holders the facility of making cash payments for deposits;

(c) whether Government propose to introduce such a facility in the State Bank of India to credit card holders; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) State Bank of India (SBI) has reported that the credit cards are issued by SBI Cards and Payment Services Private Limited (SBICPSL), registered NBFC, a Joint Venture with GE USA and is a separate entity. They have not made